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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/966,247	09/28/2001	Clark Thurston Hill	END920010029US1	5158

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EXAMINER

COSIMANO, EDWARD R

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3639

DATE MAILED: 03/24/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/966,247

Applicant(s)

HILL, CLARK THURSTON

Examiner

Edward R. Cosimano

Art Unit

3629

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 28 September 2001.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-34 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) none is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-34 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☒ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 28 September 2001 is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☒ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 9/28/01.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____.

Art Unit: 3629

1. The drawings are objected to because

A) the drawings must show every feature of the invention specified in the claims, therefore, the subject matter of:

(1) claims 2, 13 & 16 and the editing of the mailing address;
must be shown in the drawings as required by 37 CFR § 1.83(a) or the feature(s) canceled from the claim(s) (note: no new matter should be entered).

1.1 Corrected drawing sheets in compliance with 37 CFR 1.121(d) are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. Any amended replacement drawing sheet should include all of the figures appearing on the immediate prior version of the sheet, even if only one figure is being amended. The figure or figure number of an amended drawing should not be labeled as "amended." If a drawing figure is to be canceled, the appropriate figure must be removed from the replacement sheet, and where necessary, the remaining figures must be renumbered and appropriate changes made to the brief description of the several views of the drawings for consistency. Additional replacement sheets may be necessary to show the renumbering of the remaining figures. The replacement sheet(s) should be labeled "Replacement Sheet" in the page header (as per 37 CFR 1.84(c)) so as not to obstruct any portion of the drawing figures. If the changes are not accepted by the examiner, the applicant will be notified and informed of any required corrective action in the next Office action. The objection to the drawings will not be held in abeyance.

2. The disclosure is objected to because of the following informalities:

A) the following errors have been noted in the specification:

(1) the specification lacks a statement of --I claim:--, (see MPEP 608.01(m)).

B) the subject matter of:

(1) claims 2, 13 & 16 and the editing of the mailing address;
lacks antecedent basis within the specification as required by 37 CFR § 1.75(d1).

Appropriate correction is required.

3. The specification and drawings have not been checked to the extent necessary to determine the presence of all possible minor errors. Applicant's cooperation is requested in

Art Unit: 3629

correcting any errors of which applicant may become aware in the specification or drawings. Applicant should note the requirements of 37 CFR § 1.52, 37 CFR § 1.74, § 1.75, § 1.84(o,p(5)), § 1.121(a)-1.121(f) & § 1.121(h)-1.121(i).

4. Claims 13, 14, 16 & 26 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

4.1 In regard to claims 13, 14, 16 & 26, although one of ordinary skill at the time of the invention would know how to accomplish each of the individual recited actions/functions from the language of these claims, since, there is no clear and definite interconnection between one or more of the recited limitations of these claims, one of ordinary skill could not determine from the language of these claims whether or not they are in fact making and/or using the claimed invention. In this regard it is noted that from the language of these claims it is vague, indefinite and unclear:

A) in regard to claim 13 and how the "associated mailing address can be edited" prior to the "sending step", since the invention as recited in this claim does not include a step of sending.

B) in regard to claims 14, 16, 26, and how the machine can read an identifier associated with the "edited mailing address", since the invention as recited in these claims does not associate any identifier with the edited address so that the item of hard copy mail may be properly routed to the edited address.

4.2 For the above reason(s), applicant has failed to particularly point out what is regarded as the invention.

5. 35 U.S.C. § 101 reads as follows:

"Whoever invents or discovers any new and useful process, machine, manufacture, or composition of matter or any new and useful improvement thereof, may obtain a patent therefor, subject to the conditions and requirements of this title".

5.1 Claims 33-34 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 101 because the invention as claimed is directed to non-statutory subject matter.

Art Unit: 3629

5.1.1 The instant claims recite a system/device/manufacture, (claims 33-34), which has a disclosed practical application in the technological or useful arts, and which does not merely define either a computer program, a data structure, non-functional descriptive material, (i.e. mere data) or a natural phenomenon. Hence, the instant claims merely define device/manufacture that contains a data structure comprising series of steps or acts or functions or operations that as claimed could be but are not necessarily to be performed by a computer.

5.1.2 It is further noted that applicant has not recited a specific machine since the steps or acts or functions or operations recited in the claim are merely to illustrate the steps or acts or functions or operations of the instant invention since these steps or acts or functions or operations as claimed are not in fact implemented by a processor/computer. Hence, applicant envisions the invention as recited in claims 33-34 as a disembodied storage device, i.e. memory, that stores a computer program as a non-functional data structure. Such a disembodied storage device is not a specific machine because:

A) it is not associated with a computer in such a way as to cause the computer to operate in a specific manner, (note In re Beauregard 35 USPQ2d 1383 (CAFC 1995) and the associated claims of U.S. Patent 5,710,578); and

B) a memory device alone can not perform the functions recited within the claims.

Therefore, the recited disembodied storage device, which itself can not perform the functions recited within the claims as the invention, is inoperative and lacks utility for the purpose of the invention.

5.1.3 In view of the above, the invention recited in claims 33-34, merely describes an abstract idea of a disembodied storage device, i.e. memory, that stores a computer program as a non-functional data structure, since a disembodied storage device by itself can not produce a concrete and tangible result by performing the functions recited within the claims as the invention (State Street Bank & Trust Co. v. Signature Financial Group Inc. 47 USPQ2d 1596 (CAFC 1998)). Hence, claims 33-34 do not have a claimed practical application, since the disembodied storage device is inoperative and therefore lacks utility for the purpose of the invention.

Art Unit: 3629

5.1.4 Nonfunctional descriptive material cannot render nonobvious an invention that would have otherwise been obvious. Cf. *In re Gulack*, 703 F.2d 1381, 1385, 217 USPQ 401, 404 (Fed. Cir. 1983) (when descriptive material is not functionally related to the substrate, the descriptive material will not distinguish the invention from the prior art in terms of patentability). Common situations involving nonfunctional descriptive material are:

- a computer-readable storage medium that differs from the prior art solely with respect to nonfunctional descriptive material, such as music or a literary work, encoded on the medium;

- a computer that differs from the prior art solely with respect to nonfunctional descriptive material that cannot alter how the machine functions (i.e., the descriptive material does not reconfigure the computer), or

- a process that differs from the prior art only with respect to nonfunctional descriptive material that cannot alter how the process steps are to be performed to achieve the utility of the invention.

5.1.5 Hence, claims 33-34 are directed to non-statutory subject matter.

5.2 Claims 13, 14, 16 & 26 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 101 because the invention as claimed is directed to non-statutory subject matter.

5.2.1 As set forth by the Court in:

A) *In re Musgrave* 167 USPQ 280 at 289-290 (CCPA 1970), “We cannot agree with the Board that these claims (all the steps of which can be carried out by the disclosed apparatus) are directed to non-statutory processes merely because some or all of the steps therein can also be carried out in or with the aid of the human mind or because it may be necessary for one performing the process to think. All that is necessary, in our view, to make a sequence of operational steps a statutory “process” within 35 U.S.C. 101 is that it be in the technological arts so as to be in consonance with the Constitutional purpose to promote the progress of “useful arts.” Cons. Art. 1, sec. 8.”, {emphasis added}; and

B) In re Sarkar 100 USPQ 132 @ 136-137 (CCPA 1978), echoing the Board of Appeals stated in regard to claim 14 “14. A method of locating an obstruction in an open channel to affect flow in a predetermined manner comprising:

a) obtaining the dimensions of said obstruction which affect the parameters of flow;

b) constructing a mathematical model of at least that portion of the open channel in which said obstruction is to be located in accordance with the method of claim 1 using those dimensions obtained in step (a) above;

c) adjusting the location of said obstruction within said mathematical model until the desired effect upon flow is obtained in said model; and thereafter

d) constructing said obstruction within the actual open channel at the specified adjusted location indicated by the mathematical model.”;

and “Concerning claims 14-39 and the significance of “post-solution activity,” like building a bridge or dam, the board concluded: While it is true that the final step in each of these claims makes reference to the mathematical result achieved by performing the prior recited steps, we consider the connection to be so tenuous that the several steps recited in each claim when considered as a whole do not constitute a proper method under the statute.”, {emphasis added}.

5.2.2 Further, it is noted in regard to claims 14-39 of Sarkar, although step (d) of claim 14 of Sarkar references the result of step (c) of claim 14 of Sarkar it is clear from the language of step (c) of claim 14 of Sarkar that multiple adjustments to the location of the obstruction are required to be made until a location with the desired effect has been determined. Hence, the reference to constructing the obstruction at the “specified adjusted location” in step (d) of claim 14 of Sarkar is vague, indefinite and unclear in regard to which one of the possible multiple adjusted locations of the obstruction that were used during step (c) of claim 14 of Sarkar would be used when constructing the obstruction as required by step (d) of Sarkar.

Therefore, without a clear connection between step (d) of Sarkar and the remaining steps of claim 14 of Sarkar, the Board of Appeals and the Court held that these claims were not a process within the meaning of process as used in 35 U.S.C. § 101 and hence were directed to non statutory subject matter.

5.2.3 As can be seen from claims 13, 14, 16 & 26, these claims are directed to a series of devices for performing various functions or steps/actions/functions, which as set forth above in regard to the rejection of claims 13, 14, 16 & 26 under 35 U.S.C. § 112 2nd paragraph, are not clearly and definitely interconnected to one another and therefore do not provide an operative useful machine/system or method/process within the meaning of machine or process as used in 35 U.S.C. § 101.

6. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. § 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless --

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

6.1 Claims 1-34 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being clearly anticipated by either Allen et al (5,422,821) or Pintsov et al (EP 0710930).

6.2 Claims 1-34 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being clearly anticipated by Sansone (6,549,892).

Art Unit: 3629

6.3 In regard to claims 1-34, any one of either Allen et al ('821) or Pintsov et al ('930) or Sansone ('892) disclose a computer implemented mailing system, which under the control of an operating program stored in the memory of the system performs the function of mail processing. The mail/postal processing systems of either Allen et al ('821) or Pintsov et al ('930) or Sansone ('892) a first system for obtaining a unique identifier, that is the delivery point code for a particular postal delivery address by obtaining information concerning the name and address of a recipient of hardcopy mail from the item of hardcopy mail. The obtained name and address information as obtained by the first system is sent to a second system where the name and address information is electronically converted into a corresponding delivery point postal code. The delivery point postal code as determined by the second system is then affixed/printed on the corresponding item of hardcopy mail as a machine readable code or barcode by a third system so that a fourth system of the mail sorting and processing machines of the post office may detect the delivery point postal code and use it to direct the item of hard copy mail to the physical mailing address represented by the delivery point postal code.

6.3.1 In regard to the editing of claims 2, 3, 13, 14, 16, 19, 25 & 26, it is noted that either the customer may edit the customer's address by submitting a change of address information or the mail processor may have a mailing list cleansed/updated to reflect the most recent address information for a recipient.

7. The examiner has cited prior art of interest, for example:

11/94) Mummert which discloses that the user of the post office's NCOA and zip+4 or 11 digit zip codes when sorting mail can save a mailer money.

8. The shorten statutory period of response is set to expire 3 (three) months from the mailing date of this Office action.

Art Unit: 3629

9. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Edward Cosimano whose telephone number is (703) 305-9783 (after 13 April 2005 (571) 272-6802). The examiner can normally be reached Monday through Thursday from 7:30am to 6:00pm. If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, John Weiss, can be reached on (703)-308-2702 (after 13 April 2005 (571) 272-6812). Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application should be directed to the Group receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-1113.

9.1 The fax phone number for UNOFFICIAL/DRAFT FAXES is (703) 746-7240.

9.2 The fax phone number for OFFICIAL FAXES is (703) 872-9306.

9.3 The fax phone number for AFTER FINAL FAXES is (703) 872-9306.

03/19/05



Edward R. Cosimano
Primary Examiner A.U. 3629